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PRELIMINARY REPORT OF COMMITTEE V ON APPARATUS FOR PRODUCTIVE SCHOLARSHIP

[Presented at the Annual Meeting, Baltimore, December 28, 1918.]

This is hardly a report of Committee V, but rather a discussion by the vice-chairman of the aims of the Committee and of the possible means by which these aims may be carried out.

The Committee was appointed for the purpose of promoting the publication in this country of at least some part of that apparatus of scholarship which we have long been accepting as of necessity "made in Germany."

What I mean by the apparatus of scholarship includes three distinct types of publication: (1) Current bibliographies in all the various lines of intellectual work; (2) Annual reports on the progress of studies; (3) Systematic treatises or handbooks on each of the major subjects represented in university teaching.

I. In accordance with the objects for which Committee V was instituted, the first problem which presented itself was that of making arrangements for a series of bibliographies of current literature in the different branches of science and scholarship.

At the outset, however, it became apparent that the great work of the Royal Society, the publication of the *International Catalogue of Scientific Literature*, was something that could not be ignored, more particularly as the Royal Society had taken up the question of a complete revision of the method of publication of the Catalogue.

But if we are debarred, so to speak, from undertaking an *International Catalogue of Scientific Literature*, there remains the equally important and even more significant possibility of creating an *International Catalogue of Humanistic Literature*. Though various international congresses, in Europe in the days before the war, had discussed the desirability of such a catalogue, no such publication exists. If you take the whole field of the humanities, in the broadest sense, you will find many separate, special, current bibliographies, but you will find nothing on a large and comprehensive scale. Moreover, such bibliographies as were in course of publication in 1914 had fallen from two to five years in arrears, while the differ-

ences in methods represented in different publications occasioned much waste of time and effort in their use by students. Furthermore, in the thirty or forty such lists with which I am acquainted, there is a very great amount of duplication in the titles included, while, on the other hand, whole areas of literature are left untouched.

To be specific, the subjects to be embraced in our Catalogue of Humanistic Literature would be Anthropology, Ethnology, Folklore, Archaeology, History, Geography, Philology and Literary History, Classical and Oriental Studies, Religion, Philosophy, Psychology, Education, Economics, Political Science, Sociology—in a word, the varying aspects of one comprehensive and co-ordinated Study of Man. That there should be an index to the literature of man is all the more obvious at the present time when the absorbing interest of thinking people is focused upon the outstanding problems which confront mankind, and it would appear to be an obligation upon scholars to see that these discussions are placed upon the widest and most secure basis. Indeed, it is extraordinary that there should be no available bibliographical source to which we may turn in order to follow the international literature of the questions now occupying the attention of the world; and it would seem that no more substantial contribution to the furtherance of knowledge could be made by American scholarship than the publication of a full and adequate index to the current literature of the problems of mankind.

The aim of the Committee is the creation of an index, international in scope, which would take the place of all such bibliographical aids as have been issued hitherto in the field of humanistic study. The index will be inclusive and comprehensive in the fullest sense, both in regard to subject-matter and to language. The list of periodicals, society publications, and governmental publications to be analyzed will be submitted to specialists in the Association as well as to representatives of the various specialist societies for their criticism and approval. The index will be cumulative, a form of publication rendered familiar by the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature*, comprising monthly parts, with an annual bound volume, and a final volume covering a term of years. By this means, the inevitable tendency of all "annual" bibliographies to fall increasingly into arrears will be avoided, and the literature made available when most desired, that is when it has just appeared. By having the bibliography cumulated month by month, it can always be kept

relatively up to date, and the student does not have to wait until late in 1919 for the opportunity to consult the literature of 1918.

Taking up the question of getting the work done, I have gone into the matter in detail with the H. W. Wilson Company of New York, the publishers of the *United States Catalog*, the *Readers Guide*, and several other bibliographical publications of the same type. The bibliography would be announced as under the direction of the American Association of University Professors and the names of the members of Committee V would appear as a guarantee of the scientific character of the undertaking. The entire work would be under the immediate critical supervision of the Association, as represented by this Committee and the members interested in the various special fields included. The whole undertaking would be informed by the idea of making an absolutely sound bibliographical contribution to the study of the subjects represented. On the financial side, it would be understood that the Association incurs no obligation, as the publication would be supported on the basis of subscriptions from universities, libraries, and associations directly interested.

II. The second problem which Committee V has considered is that of providing means for the publication of annual reports on the progress of studies. To be effective in the highest degree such a series of reports should begin with a survey of progress in all the various branches of science and scholarship during the nineteenth century. But whether this historical work be undertaken or not, it seems highly desirable that the publication of annual reports of this sort on a very extensive scale should be encouraged in this country. Naturally, the Association would not undertake to prepare the reports, but it should be in a position to act with a view to obtaining a co-ordinated effort from the various national specialist societies for the production of the reports, and it should be able to arrange for their publication when written. It would seem desirable for the Association to take up the question of the preparation of these reports with the associations representing the various subjects. There appears, furthermore, to be a possibility of the Association being able to arrange for the continued publication of results, perhaps even on a basis of their free distribution.

III. The third type of work with which the Committee has concerned itself is the possibility of procuring the preparation and

publication of extensive handbooks or manuals on each of the greater subjects represented in its program. While in the United States we have brought the high school and college text-book to a high state of perfection, we are entirely deficient in the systematic presentation of broad subjects in a comprehensive manner. So while Germany was using a translation of an American text-book on chemistry when the war broke out, we have had to contemplate the necessity of republishing Beilstein's *Handbuch der Organischen Chemie* in German in the United States as a necessity for winning the war. This is a contrast that requires to be emphasized, for such handbooks, representing the knowledge available on a given subject at a given time, are required for the purposes of teaching in the universities, for the information of the general public, and as a basis for research.

Works of this character, it is obvious, cannot be prepared by the American Association of University Professors. They must be taken in hand by the national associations devoted to the particular subjects, whether chemistry, philology or political science. But our Association, standing as it does for the collective interests of university teachers and scholars, can urge upon the attention of the special associations the need for such works, and it can undertake to arrange for their publication when prepared.

For this type of publication, some organization not at present available would seem to be necessary. It has been suggested that there might be formed a central organization representing the various university presses, and indeed there seems no good reason why universities at present without regularly constituted presses should not be included, to undertake the publication of works too large for any one of them to venture upon singly. There is at the present time a movement on foot with this end in view, but I feel assured that whether this suggestion bears fruit or not the way will be open for the publication of such works when they shall have been prepared. Indeed, what we want most at this moment is specific information in regard to large works of a scholarly nature which have been delayed for lack of means of publication. We all know of some such publications and the Committee needs now all the information available in regard to such works. The time has come, indeed, for trying to convince the people of the United States that our position of relative inferiority in respect to scholarly productivity is not due to lack of resource and initiative on the

part of university men, but is due to lack of money for the publication of large works of a scholarly nature.

In conclusion, may I say that the difficulties in the way of an American army getting to Europe were much greater than anything we are likely to encounter—and the American army arrived. There is no reason why American scholarship should not get to the front in the same way as the American army. Only there is this to be said, that the world is ruled by ideas and not by armies, and we are in a very real sense the guardians of the ideas of democracy.

F. J. TEGGART.